

Effective Grammar Teaching: Balancing Input and Output

This presentation will help you enrich classroom time by examining how to incorporate the practice of real language into grammar lessons.

Participants will:

- consider what “real communication” means
- examine the motivating impact that creativity and opportunities for personal expression have on language learning
- work with sample lesson plans and communicative activities that balance language input and output

The activity ideas and practical steps outlined in this session are applicable for classes of any age, ability level, or level of access to technology.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Spenser Lemaich



Spenser Lemaich works as an English for Academic Purposes and exam preparation instructor and teacher trainer in Indonesia, and he was previously Director of Studies at a private language school. He recently served two years as a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow, teaching Linguistics and TEFL Methodology courses.

Spenser has spoken frequently on ELT methodology, second language acquisition, and culture instruction in classroom teaching. He is a strong advocate of engaging students through critical and creative thinking and using learners' mother tongue in language instruction. His MA in TESOL degree is from Biola University.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Effective Grammar Teaching: Balancing Input and Output



Today's Topics



1. The **importance of balanced input and output** in communicative teaching
2. Balancing input and output in **lesson planning**
3. **Activities** for increasing student output and supporting creative expression in grammar practice

Discussion Question 1

Look at pictures of two different classrooms.

Which classroom do you think would be more effective for grammar teaching? ***Why?***

Classroom A



Classroom B



Discussion Question 1: Reflection

Lecture versus **interactive** environment

- Input alone will not produce fluency in productive skills

(Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012)

What is a **communicative classroom**?

- Learning by sharing and *using language* rather than simply being told about it

Teaching versus Learning* - First Insight into Input



***This idea from** Brown, H.D. (2014). Principles of language learning and teaching. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Balancing Input and Output in a Course

“A course should include a roughly even balance of:

- **meaning-focused input**
- **language-focused learning**
- **meaning-focused output and**
- **fluency activities.”**

(Nation and Macalister, 2010, p. 39)



Discussion Question 2: A Language Joke

A woman with red-rimmed glasses and a black vest over a white polka-dot shirt is looking down at an open book. The background is a chalkboard with the word 'School' written in white chalk.

Teacher: Give me a sentence that starts with *I*...

Student: I is the...

Teacher: Stop! You should never say *I is* – you should always say *I am*. Now try again - what did you want to say?

Student: I'm sorry. I am the ninth letter of the alphabet.*

What mistake did this teacher make?

Discussion Question 2: Reflection



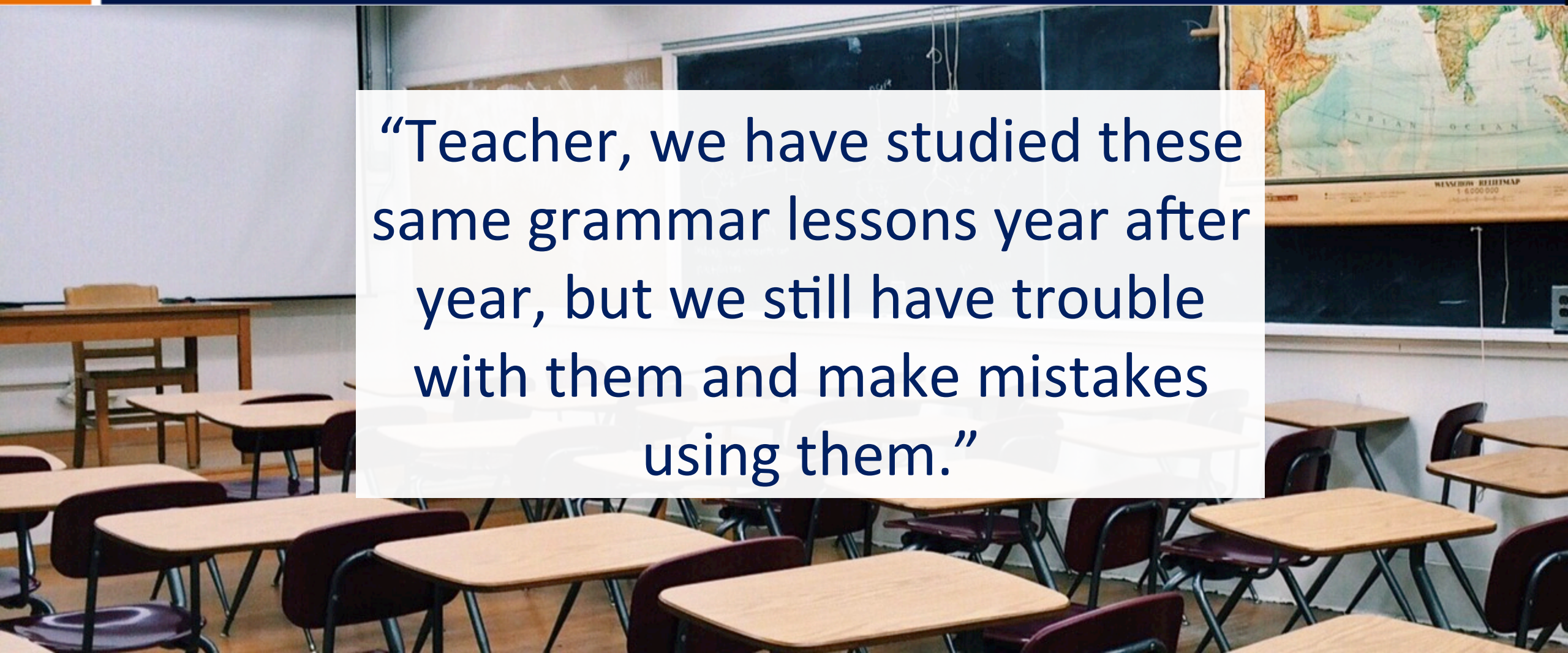
- A classroom **out of balance!**
 - Too much **focus on language forms**
 - Not enough **engaging for meaning**

Output as Creative Expression of the Individual



Discussion Question 3: A Story

What might explain this situation?



“Teacher, we have studied these same grammar lessons year after year, but we still have trouble with them and make mistakes using them.”

Discussion Question 3: Reflection

- Primary issue: a lack of communicative skills practice
 - Learning *about* language or learning to *use* language?
 - Learning *lessons* or *practicing communication*?
- Skills-integrated grammar use begins in class and extends beyond

Recap: Importance of Balance



Question 1: Input alone is not enough → communication

Question 2: Output needs meaning, creativity, and personalization

Question 3: Skills-integrated grammar practice begins in class

Today's Topics



1. The **importance of balanced input and output** in communicative teaching
2. Balancing input and output in **lesson planning**
3. **Activities** for increasing student output and supporting creative expression in grammar practice

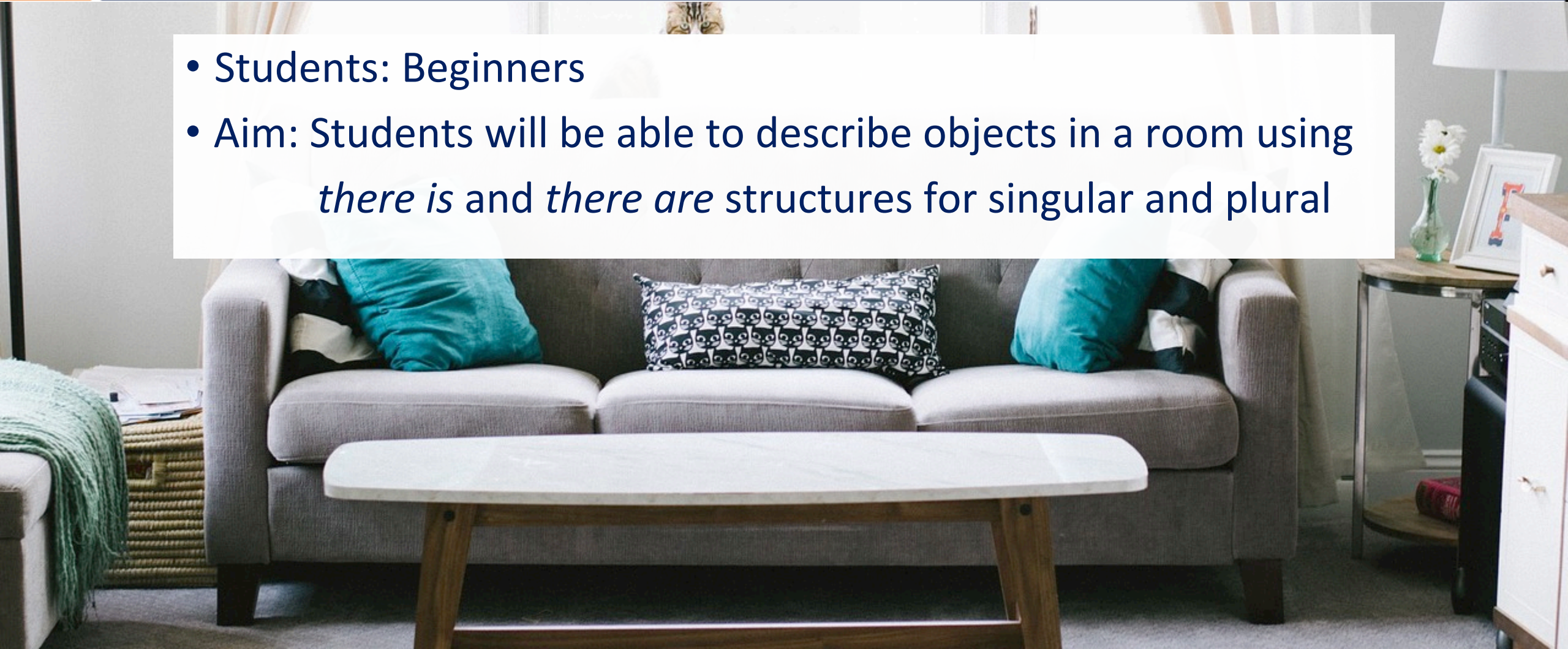
Finding the Balance: Planning



1. **Entering/exploring** a topic
2. **Focusing** on language
3. **Responding to/developing** the topic

Sample Lesson 1: *there is* and *there are*

- Students: Beginners
- Aim: Students will be able to describe objects in a room using *there is* and *there are* structures for singular and plural



Sample Lesson 1: *there is* and *there are*

- Students: Beginners
- Aim: Students will be able to describe objects in a room using *there is* and *there are* structures for singular and plural

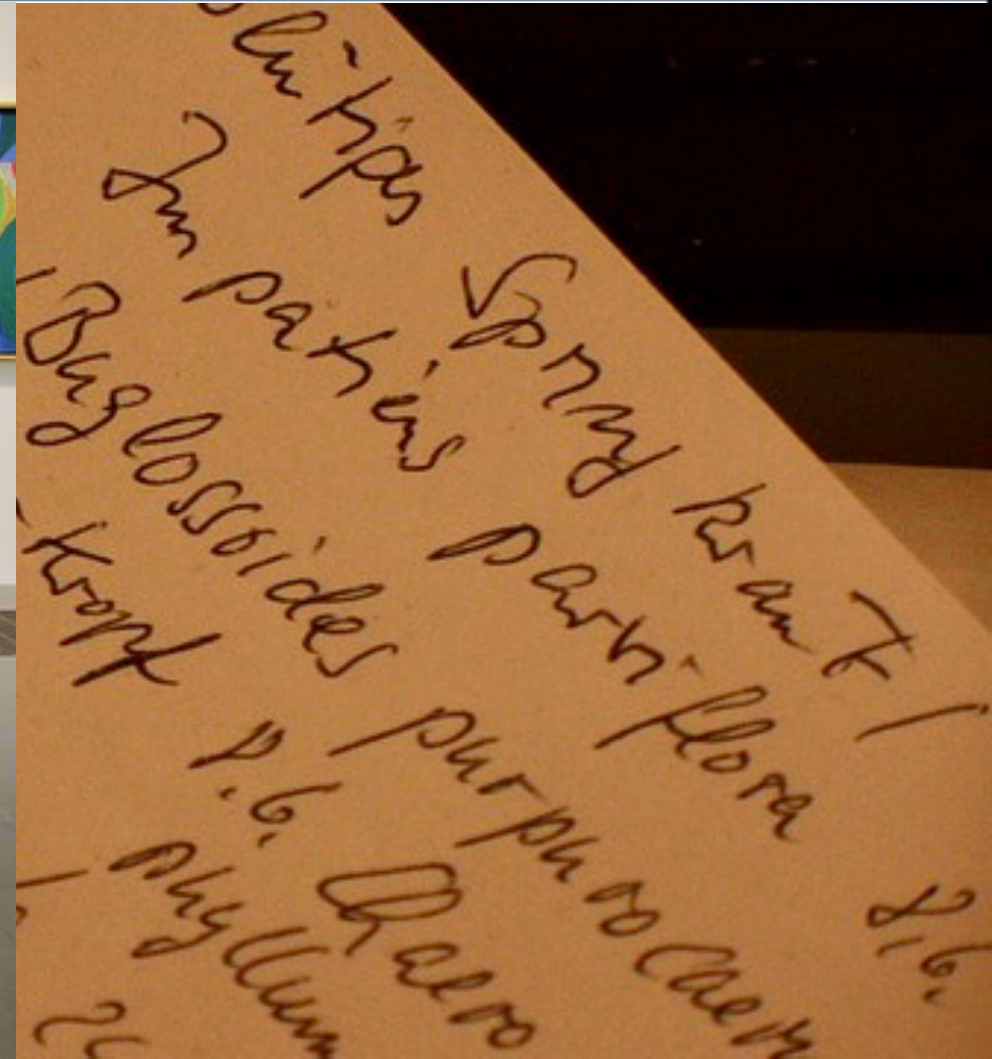
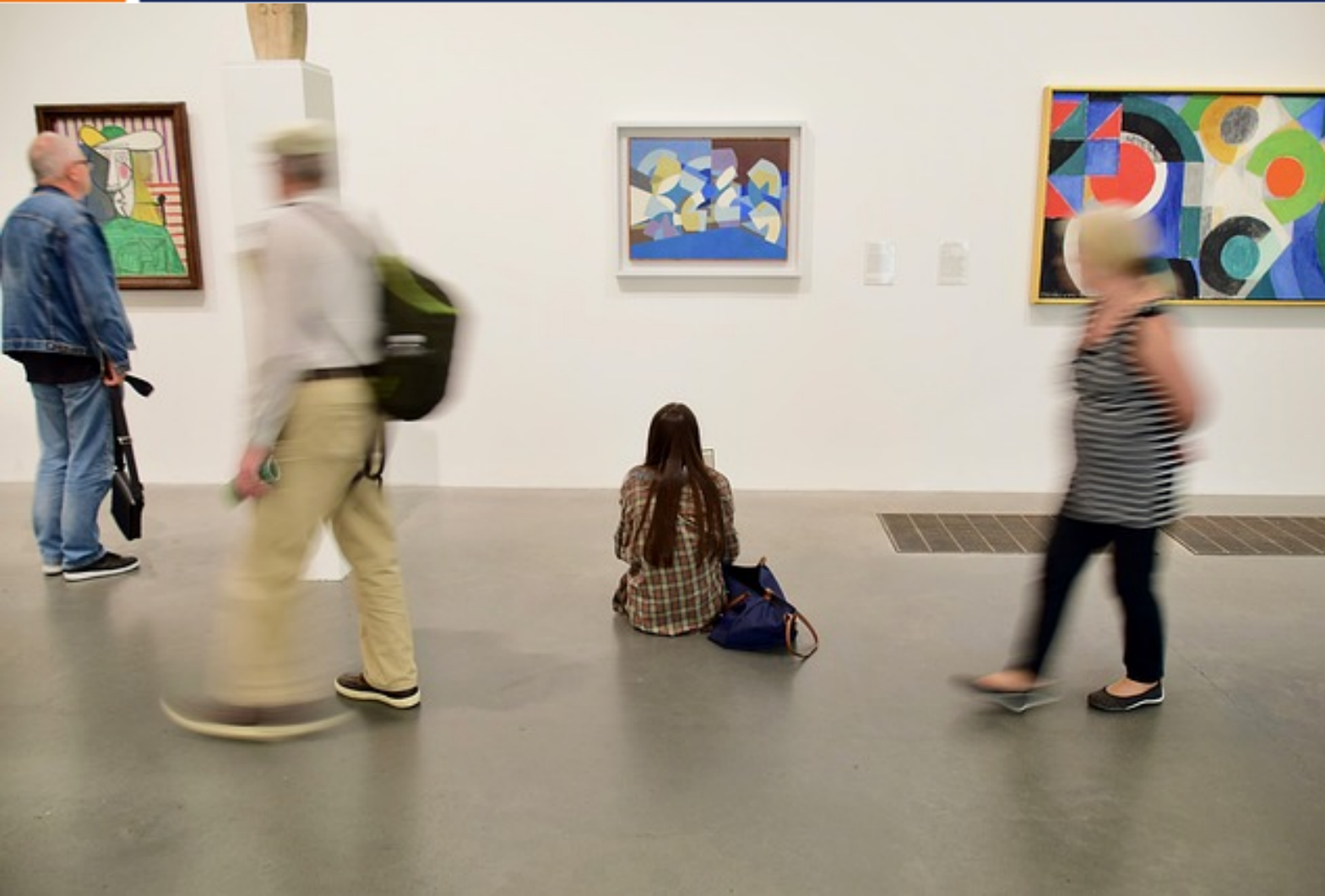
1. Explore
topic:
review
vocabulary

2. Teacher
models
language
(sing./pl.)

3. Personalize
through
description

4. Interact:
read,
question,
and find
author

Responding to the Topic: Written Gallery Walk as Communicative Writing



Sample Lesson 1: *there is* and *there are*

- Students: Beginners
- Aim: Students will be able to describe objects in a room using *there is* and *there are* structures for singular and plural

1. Explore
topic:
review
vocabulary

2. Teacher
models
language
(sing./pl.)

3. Personalize
through
description

4. Interact:
read,
question,
and find
author

Balancing Input and Output in Lesson 1



“A course should include a roughly even balance of:

- **meaning-focused input**
 - working with room images
- **language-focused learning**
 - model sentences
- **meaning-focused output**
 - describing a room
- **fluency activities.”**
 - reading & finding the author

(Nation and Macalister, 2010, p. 39)

Communicative Writing – Online Space



Online Collaborative Space (www.padlet.com)

padlet

favorite_border remake REMAKE share_arrow SHARE settings more_horiz

Spenser Edward Lemaich + 11 • 20d

SP7 New things and things you're proud of

edit delete more_horiz

Anonymous 20d

My first travelling w

favorite_border 0

Add comment

Anonymous 20d

Trying New Things

Last holiday i was try something new in my life with my son. We were played a roller coaster. At the begining the roller coaster went slowly to the top after that changing fastest as long as the track. Me and my son were feel

Anonymous 20d

How do you feel about trying new things?


trying a new thing? that might be great for person like me, who enjoyed a life and wants to make up with a new people around. New things isn't just a new hobbies. It's can be anything, maybe try a new job or new cities?

Travelling is my favorite hobby, you can try a new city, food, culture, languages, or even a new friends. My first travelling with my friend, when I was senior high school student. It was totally change my

Anonymous 20d

How do I feel about trying new things

i can't really answer this because i haven't tried any new things recently, but i once tried to snorkel and it was really fun though i'm quite good at swimming but swimming in the sea is really different so it challenged me and i succeeded, and i hope any other new things i'll do in the future will be this fun




Anonymous 20d

i admire one of the legend of F1, his name is Ayrton Senna, he is a racer from Brazil. He is a hero for Brazil, and he is my idol. he gave inspiration for a lot of people, especially people in Brazil, he was the spotlight of F1 back in the 80s and 90s, when Brazil was nothing in the eye of the world, Senna proudly represent his nation with racing in F1, he was the God of raining condition, while others used to slow down when it rains but ot Senna he

Anonymous 20d

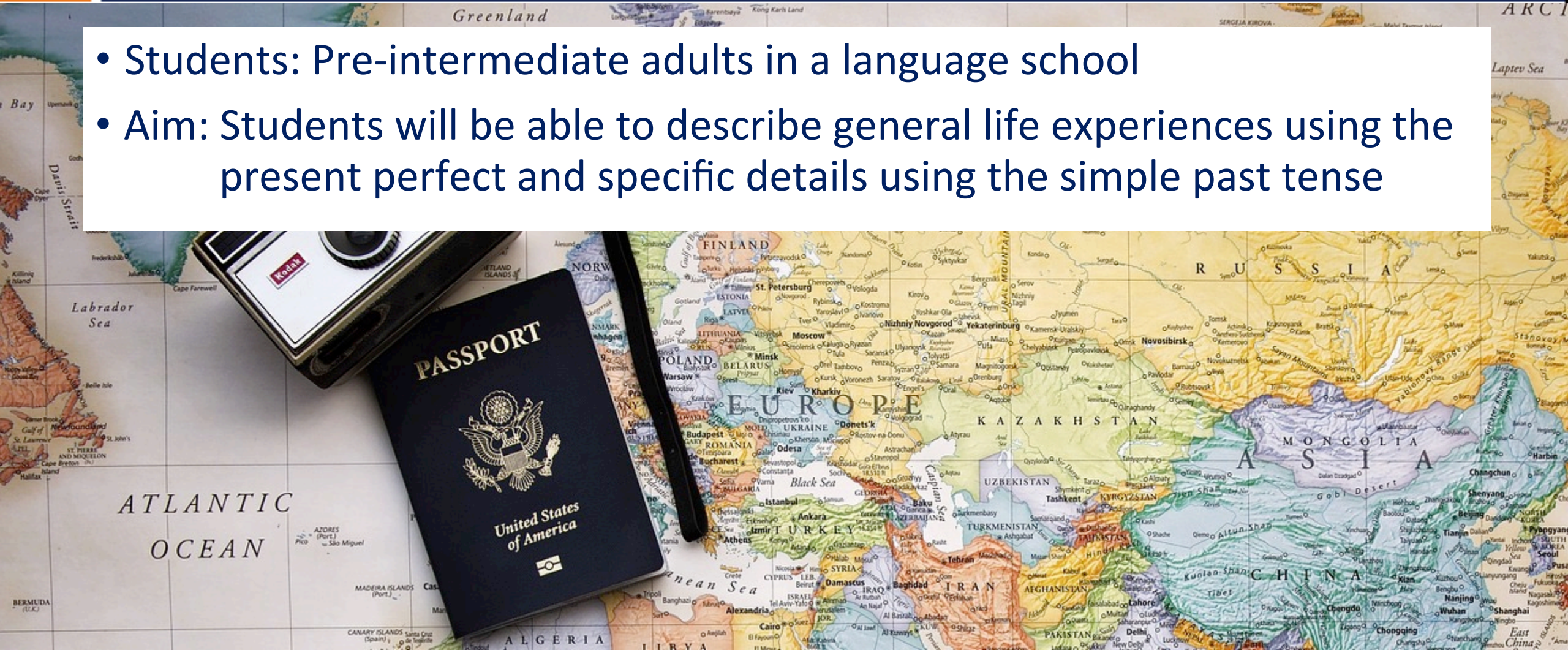
Last year i went to Papua, that was the new place i have ever gone. I was feeling exited because the place was so far from Surabaya.

I have ever gone with my friends for the duty reason and an animal welfare cos we were released the habitat Papua animal call "Kasuari Bird", we were very happy cos the mision was complite and the baby Kasuari could life in there habitat place...



Sample Lesson 2: present perfect and past simple

- Students: Pre-intermediate adults in a language school
- Aim: Students will be able to describe general life experiences using the present perfect and specific details using the simple past tense



Entering/Exploring a Topic

Another way?

1. Explore topic:
review vocabulary



Sample Lesson 2:

present perfect and past simple - dialog



Journalist: I'm here with Ann Johnson, world traveler. What's the most interesting trip you've ever taken?

Ann: Hmm...that's a difficult question. One of the most interesting was when I visited the old city of Petra in Jordan. I went there last summer.

Journalist: Have you ever done anything dangerous?

Ann: I swam with crocodiles in Botswana 2 years ago.

Journalist: What's next on your travel list?

Ann: I haven't ridden on the Trans-Siberian Railway in Russia. And I've never seen the statues on Easter Island in Chile.

Sample Lesson 2:

present perfect and past simple – analysis



Journalist: I'm here with Ann Johnson, world traveler. What's the most interesting trip you've ever taken?

Ann: Hmm...that's a difficult question. One of the most interesting was when I visited the old city of Petra in Jordan. I went there last summer.

Journalist: Have you ever done anything dangerous?

Ann: I swam with crocodiles in Botswana 2 years ago.

Journalist: What's next on your travel list?

Ann: I haven't ridden on the Trans-Siberian Railway in Russia. And I've never seen the statues on Easter Island in Chile.

Sample Lesson 2:

present perfect and past simple

- Students: Pre-intermediate adults in a language school
- Aim: Students will be able to describe general life experiences using the present perfect and specific details using the simple past tense

Dialog/text of an interview of a world traveler

Analysis of text: Ss find examples of tenses & positive/negative/question forms

3 or 4 students claim to have had an experience (only one has). Other Ss ask questions and guess who

Sample Lesson 2: present perfect and past simple - interaction

I have swum with dolphins.



Balancing Input and Output in Lesson 2



“A course should include a roughly even balance of:

- **meaning-focused input** - dialog/text
- **language-focused learning** - analyze the text
- **meaning-focused output** - creating sentences
- **fluency activities.”** - asking & answering to guess

(Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 39)

Today's Topics



1. The importance of balanced input and output in communicative teaching
2. Balancing input and output in lesson planning
3. **Activities** for increasing student output and supporting creative expression in grammar practice

Increasing Output: Think, Produce, and Communicate



Building Topics Through Brainstorming



Teams think of 3 experiences:

What experiences might a famous world traveler have?

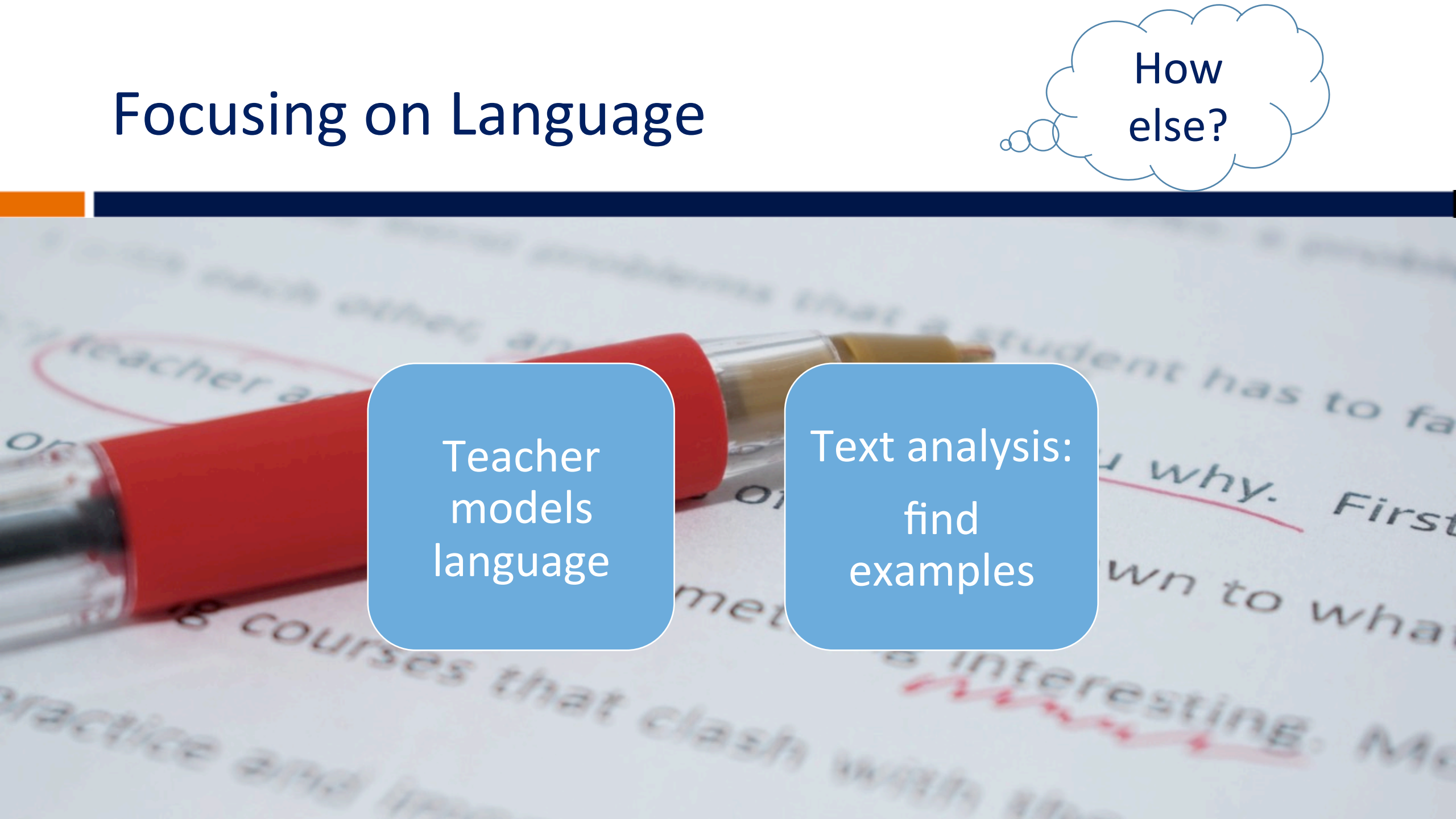
- 1.) She has hiked in the Himalayas.
- 2.) She has cruised on the Nile.
- 3.) She has toured Europe.

→ In the language focus, the teacher generates **model sentences**:

- ***She has visited Europe many times.***
- ***She went to France in 2010, 2012 and 2016.***

Focusing on Language

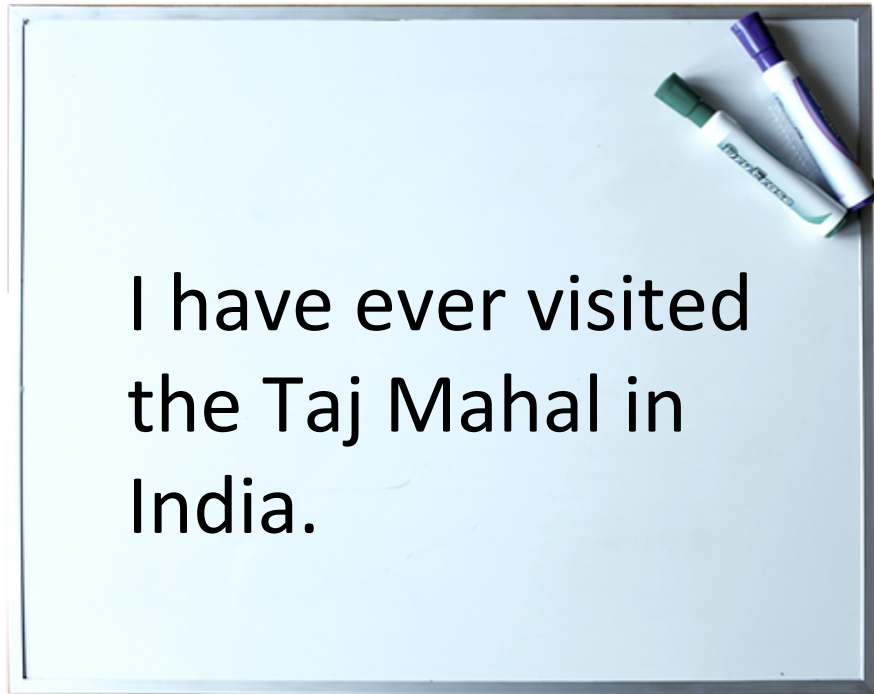
How
else?



Teacher
models
language

Text analysis:
find
examples

Language Focus Through Competition



Grammar Gamble

Teams get 100 points.

Teams are asked to secretly identify an error in a sentence

Confident: offer a large number

Unsure: offer a low number

RED TEAM

$$\begin{array}{r} 100 \\ + 25 \\ \hline = 125 \end{array}$$

BLUE TEAM

$$\begin{array}{r} 100 \\ + 10 \\ \hline = 90 \end{array}$$

ORANGE TEAM

$$\begin{array}{r} 100 \\ + 5 \\ \hline = 105 \end{array}$$

Points awarded based on identifying the error.

Thinking – Role Play Activities

How?

Situation: Job Interview

Student A: Employer

Student B: Prospective employee

Provide support if necessary

- Sentence frames: *Have you ever worked in ____ before? When?*
- List of topics to cover
- Time to brainstorm ideas



Communicative Sharing

Mingle/Find Someone Who...

How?

Students use a survey with
blank names

___ *has swum in the ocean.*

___ *has never traveled abroad.*

** ask a follow-up question*



Communicative Sharing - Question Card

- Students have a question and must ask everyone else in class

Example:

***Have you ever eaten something
unusual?***

What was it? When did you eat it?

Where were you?



Closing Comments



References

- Brown, H.D. (2014). Principles of language learning and teaching. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Brown, S. & Larson-Hall, J. (2012). Second language acquisition myths: Applying second language research to classroom teaching. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Internet TESL Journal Jokes page: <http://iteslj.org/c/jokes.html>
- Nation, I.S.P. & Macalister, J. (2010) Language curriculum design. New York: Routledge.
- Pekoz, B. (2008). Integrating grammar for communicative language teaching. The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. XIV, No. 10, October 2008
<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Pekoz-Grammar.html>

Thank you!

Email: americanenglish@state.gov

americanenglishwebinars.com

americanenglish.state.gov

facebook.com/AmericanEnglishatState

facebook.com/AmericanEnglishforEducators



AMERICAN ENGLISH